1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

137 many other shrubs, a large variety of ferns and mosses, and in-
[262] numerable fungi, some of which are eaten. Creepers and epiphytes of all kinds abound, but there are fewer orchids than are reported from other islands: a small white variety is the most common. The abundance of rattan and other thorny plants makes progress
[487] through uncut bush a slow and sometimes painful business, and as a path that is little used very soon becomes overgrown, no one ever goes any distance into the bush without a knife.

The bush is disappointing in its lack of colour. It is all too green. Not only are the flowers few and far between—partly owing
[301] to the fact that a native will never pass a flowering shrub without taking his toll of its blossoms to put in his hair—but the birds and
136 the butterflies also are less brilliant than I had expected. There are some bright red and blue parrots, and the cockatoos, dazzlingly white in the sunshine, are conspicuous amid the foliage, but otherwise the birds are not striking, except the hornbill, with his extraordinary yellow beak and the whirr of his wings, which is one of the most characteristic sounds of the forest. There are several varieties of pigeon, called in imitation of its plaintive note, *kūrō*, and numbers of small birds, of which the most noticeable is a species of wagtail. Butterflies, though very large, are mostly black or brown, flecked or striped with white, but there is also a very beautiful black one with small iridescent bluish-green patches on its smaller wings.

The bush abounds with life, but nearly all the creatures are of small size. The largest animal is the wild pig, which if you meet it is usually far more frightened than ferocious, unless it is wounded, or has young. The cuscus opossum, or phalanger, which lives in the holes of hollow trees, attains to about the size of a large cat. Flying foxes in great numbers keep up their short sharp bark nearly all night, and what with them and the frogs, and some insect of the grasshopper tribe (called by the natives *nen-nen*, because its note sounds like these syllables repeated in a high-pitched voice), the bush is never silent except perhaps for an hour or so before dawn. Iguanas and all kinds of small lizards are
[825] plentiful, and there are also snakes, whether poisonous or not I cannot say. The natives are afraid of them, and kill them on sight, if possible, by beating them with a stick. The large coco-nut-eating land-crab (from Guppy's description I take this to be *Birgus latro*) is an odd sight. These natives do not eat it, as do others elsewhere,

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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PLATE 7

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b. TAKON, WIFE OF WASE

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a. TAGOAL COMING TO VISIT HER HUSBAND'S PEOPLE

[Facing p. 87]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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aromatic leaves. Then they bring it into the village and put it in the hut of the boy's mother. The boy's mother catches a pig and cooks it. The men and women who helped with the platform must be given pig to eat all together. The platform is laid down inside the house. 585

Then all the women who stand in the relation of *watʃitʃio* to the boy (see Chap. II, p. 68, for this relationship) go and lie on the platform in couples, holding each other fast. Each couple pretends to be husband and wife, who play at copulating with each other. When one couple has been lying on the platform for a while they get up and another pair take their places, till all the boy's *watʃitʃio* have taken part in the performance. 585 831

When this is finished, all the men and women of the boy's village adorn themselves with paint and put on the mark called *makai*—a line of white outlining the edge of the hair and the forehead. Then they all go to the girl's village. They *kōma* along the road. The people of the girl's village have been similarly adorning themselves and they also *kōma*. They ornament the girl with the *makai* line and with a clam-shell nose ornament, and hang strings of *beroan* across her shoulders and round her waist. 585 302 [301]

The people from the boy's village reach the girl's village just after dark. They *kōma* as they come. They join in the *kōma* at the girl's village. All the people of both villages stand up together and *kōma*. But the boy and the girl do not join in it, they hide in different huts, and are not allowed to come out. The boy's mother joins in the *kōma*, but the girl's mother stays with her daughter inside her own hut. This goes on all night. 585

Just before dawn breaks, one of the girl's male relatives takes up the boy on his shoulder (*watok*). This duty must not be performed by the girl's *tuva*, who is *waris* to the girl's husband and cannot touch him. It is usually undertaken by one of the men who will be *tauwē* to the husband, i.e. his wife's brother, blood or classificatory. He is assisted by men of the boy's clan, who place their hands under the boy's buttocks and take some of the weight. The corresponding relative of the boy, who is *tauwē* to the girl, i.e. her husband's sister, takes up the girl on her shoulders in the same way, and is similarly assisted by members of the girl's clan. The heads of both boy and girl are ornamented with cock's feathers, and strings of *beroan* are hung across their shoulders. *Beroan* is also hung over both the wrists of the boy, but not of the girl. 585 482 [301]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Kurtatchi

PLATE 9

142
291
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A NEWLY MARRIED PAIR: KAKARI AND MUBEN

[Facing p. 102]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 10

b. TARUBI

a. IRA

THE BELLES OF THE VILLAGE

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301
304
832

[Facing p. 108]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 19

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301

UPI BOYS AT BUKA PASSAGE

[facing p. 194]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

trees they felled, nor pick up those that lay scattered thickly on the ground. Leaving behind us a desolate scene of wreckage, we went on farther and skirted the village of Tchinopai. From now onwards we climbed steeply, dropping into deep valleys between ridges. As we stood, during one of the many pauses, on a downward gradient, we could see the lights of the men in front of us going down into the depths, and those of the head of the procession climbing skywards in the far distance. There must have been between two and three hundred in single file, with torches at intervals, their flicker making the forest into a mysterious place full of weird shadows. It is not difficult to understand the general dread of the forest after nightfall.

When we had almost made up our minds that we were to walk all night, we came to the village of Nimbarossi. On the verandah of a house by the road was laid out another store of provisions, which were promptly distributed. The crowd then disposed itself for what remained of the night, some inside the house, some on the verandah, and a great many on the ground outside.

Every one was up at dawn next morning, and the long line continued to wind up hill and down dale, crossing rivers—fortunately plentifully supplied with boulders—at intervals. The line was constantly broken by men dashing into the bush to get some sweet-smelling or bright-coloured plant, which they stuck into their hair and armbands, or their belts, if they were lucky enough to possess that much-coveted article.

Presently the whole line halted and collected in a clearing, spreading wild banana leaves to sit upon. A native never sits on the bare ground if he can help it. The boys who were wearing *upi* made elaborate covers for them with leaves, because it would not do for the novices to see them before they had received their own. The older men rubbed lime over their faces. One man produced a tin of talcum powder, which was passed round, its contents being daubed on foreheads and cheeks. Another was the envied possessor of a pot of brilliantine, which he daubed under his armpits with evident pleasure. They hung a wreath of aromatic plants round my neck, which I appreciated as evidence that they did not resent my presence. Presently the sound of a bull-roarer was heard in the distance. I was told that this was the voice of the *urar*, and that we should presently see them. Before moving on, each man carefully whipped with the large leaves of the wild banana the

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 26

881
778
411
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FEMALE *URAR* FIGURE AT *WAPI* CEREMONY

[facing p. 213]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

stood to him in the relation of *pi'an* (cross-cousin), and as he was therefore prohibited from touching his skin, another man was specially appointed to perform the duty of putting on the paint.

They may not decorate themselves with a plant called *tsutsuir*, which is much liked by these people and is frequently worn tucked into the arm-band. This prohibition is removed after the watawutch ceremony.

IV. *Other regulations.*

In the olden days, boys wearing the *upi* were not allowed to handle edged tools. They might help to clear the bush, but all cutting was done by the *amro*. This taboo is no longer enforced.

A boy wearing the *upi* may not be beaten by anybody, no matter what his offence. Those who break this taboo will die. Specific instances were cited of people who had done so—and had died. It is permissible for two boys to fight each other, though it is difficult to imagine how they could do so effectively without first removing their head-gear.

In recent years, with the increase in the practice of going away to work for white men, another rule has been made, that the boys wearing the *upi* may not sign on as indentured labourers. For some time after putting on the hat they must not work for white men at all, but after their hair has grown to some length they can work as casuals, provided they work on a plantation near enough to their own village to enable them to return to it each night. They are not allowed to remove their *upi* while at work. After they have been through the *watawutʃ* they may sign on as indentured labourers and are permitted, if they wish, to remove the *upi* and tie up their hair in a bit of cloth; this is done to keep it out of the way rather than to prevent it from being seen, since the prohibition on showing it is removed at the *watawutʃ*.

A further complication is now caused by the boarding-schools instituted by the various missions. A boy from Ruri who went to one of these had his *upi* removed by the priest. His people were very angry, but the affair was not as bad as it might have been, because the lad had been through the *watawutʃ* ceremony. It was legitimised by making a feast at Ruri, to which the Kurtatchi people were invited; this brought the matter to my notice. (Incidentally, those who went said it wasn't much of a feast, there was only one pig and some taro, and they got only very little apiece!)

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 31

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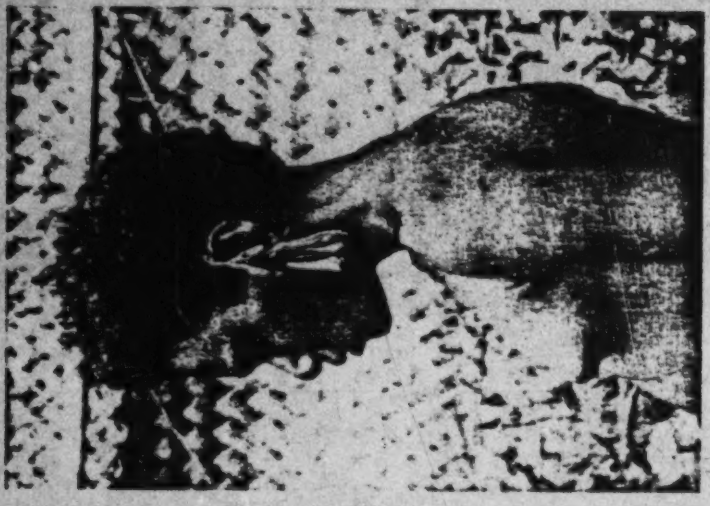

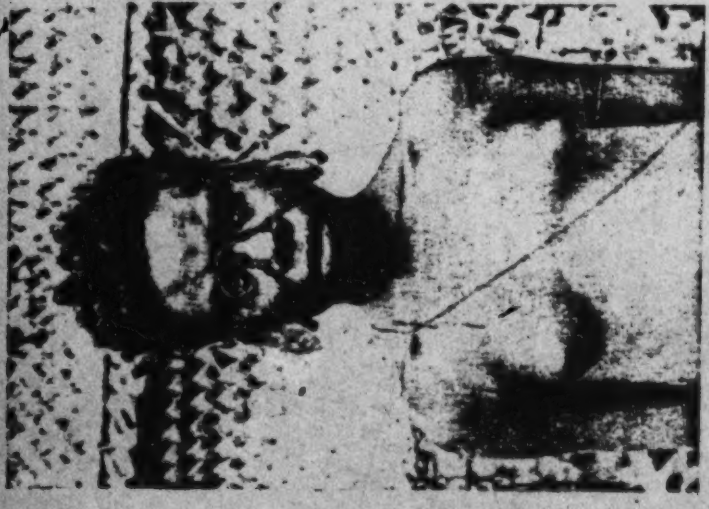

[Facing p. 252]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Then the men go into the bush and cut down wild areca-nut palms and make planks which they bring to the village. They make a long platform like a bridge, supported on poles stuck in the ground, leading from the front verandah of the hut to the banana palm, between the two rows of saplings.

One of the two girls who have been keeping the menstruating girl company now comes out of the hut, walks along this bridge, and climbs up the banana palm. She sits down on top of the bunch of bananas. This girl is called *mani*, 'the opossum'. I could get no explanation for the use of this term. The girl chosen must be too young to menstruate, and is usually about seven or eight, judging from the appearance of the children who were pointed out as being of the right size to act as *mani*.

The girl for whom the ceremony is being performed now comes out of the hut for the first time since the flow began. By this time it will have finished. She wears round her waist a series of girdles made of the outer bark of the banana palm, some scraped and dried in the sun, with a pattern cut on them; other girdles are made of a white cane, and others still of the same cane (rattan, I think) dyed red with *rivo* (*Morinda citrifolia*). She also wears a plaited and twisted belt (*sonu*) of the inner skin of the bush banana, similar to that sometimes seen at dances. There are five different kinds of girdles altogether. From them, in front, is suspended a bunch of leaves (*onon*), chosen either for their decorative appearance, or for their aromatic properties. A long list of native names of leaves suitable for this purpose was given to me. These must not be cut, but must be pulled up by the roots. The roots are left attached, and are bound round with lengths of ceremonial currency, both shell and teeth. The roots must be uppermost, coming up on to the girl's chest; the leaves hang down in front of her, the fastening being at about the level of the navel. She must wear no other covering. Her hair is painted with the pattern called *waputan urits*, i.e. a red stripe in the middle, going from forehead to back of neck, a stripe of black on either side, then another stripe of red on the outer side of the black stripes, these red ones reaching down to the ears. Her temples and forehead are edged with white paint. Round her neck she wears a *pirir* (ornament made of clam shell with overlay of tortoise-shell filigree work, see Pl. 68).

She walks along the bridge and climbs up into the banana palm, sitting down just below the bunch of fruit, on a small plank which

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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term is *kūra*, which is apparently onomatopoeic, somewhat resembling the noise the creatures make in the bush. Each variety has its own name. One, called *lululayitʃ*, is said to come down with the rain. Some kinds have special conventions attached to their consumption (see p. 158).

Birds, especially pigeons, are much appreciated as a relish with taro. They are usually roasted whole on the embers and pulled apart with the fingers. Domestic fowls are rarely eaten, and seem to be kept only for the sake of the cock's tail feathers, which are valued as hair ornaments on ceremonial occasions. The eggs of the domestic fowl are left alone, but those of the little black bush fowl or megapode (*iowa*) are eaten with gusto when nearly ready for hatching. They are done up in little packages of leaves and cooked in hot embers, usually only on festal occasions. I failed to live up to my motto, 'Try anything once', when offered a packet of this delicacy.

When any one walking through the bush comes upon the partly decayed trunk of a fallen tree, he will root about in the soft wood in search of a particular kind of grub, yellowish-white in colour, with a body 2 or 3 inches long and perhaps half an inch thick. These are collected, taken home, and cooked, to serve as an additional 'relish' to the evening taro. They are said to be good eating because they have 'plenty of grease' (*momōna*).

3. *Sea food*

Pig being a luxury usually reserved for feasts, and other flesh food being somewhat scarce and hard to come by, the usual relish to a meal of taro consists of fish. The most highly prized of all fish is the bonito (*atūn*), but a great variety of fish can be obtained and nearly all are eaten. The various methods of catching them are described in Chapter IX.

Fish is generally cooked by being wrapped in leaves and roasted in the embers. I have never seen it being boiled. It may also be slightly smoked, so that it will keep for a short time (but never completely smoke-dried so as to be fit for storage.) In this half-smoked condition it plays the principal part as a medium of barter in the regular exchange of fish and taro which takes place between the women of different villages.

Many varieties of shell-fish are collected on the reef by the women and girls. These are boiled in native pots, and the fish is

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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PERSONAL ADORNMENT

Most of these people take great delight in decorating themselves with ornaments, paint, and flowers, even when nothing special is going on. A few are careless, and can hardly be induced to trim their hair even for an important ceremony; these are the subject of comment on the part of the others, whatever their age or sex. On the whole, the women appear to take less trouble over their personal appearance than do the men; they certainly make less fuss about it. Some of the men—not only the young ones—spend a good deal of time in trimming and putting paint on their hair, carving themselves combs out of bamboo (Pl. 67, no. 9), and searching for aromatic leaves to wear in their armlets or round their necks.

Hair-dressing.

The method of dressing the hair most generally favoured for special occasions is to trim it rather close at the back, and very close at the sides, leaving a small triangular patch just in front of the ears. This cut accentuates the straightness of the sides and back of the head, which is much admired. The general effect is imitated in the wooden figures made for certain ceremonies (see p. 236 and Pl. 28). This method of hair-cutting is called *tʃirkĕ*. Red, black, or yellow paint may be used in conjunction with it. Though almost obligatory on special occasions, it may be worn at any time at the wish of the individual. Round the temples and across the forehead the hair is trimmed to this shape ⌒. To trim it thus is called *penomola*. The line of white paint which usually follows the edge of the hair is called *wakai*, to put it on is *wakamola*. The *wakai* line may not be used by boys wearing the *upi*, until the time of the *watawutʃ* ceremony, when it is put on them at a certain stage in the proceedings.

On special occasions a pattern of black and red (*usboŋ*) is painted on the hair, according to the clan of the individual. Those belonging to the Naboin clan paint the sides black with a broad band of red in the centre, passing from front to back. Those of the Nakarib clan have the side bands red and the centre black.

The face is painted according to individual taste. A splash of bright red covering one ear and another round the eye on the other side, or one broad line going right across, gives a striking effect

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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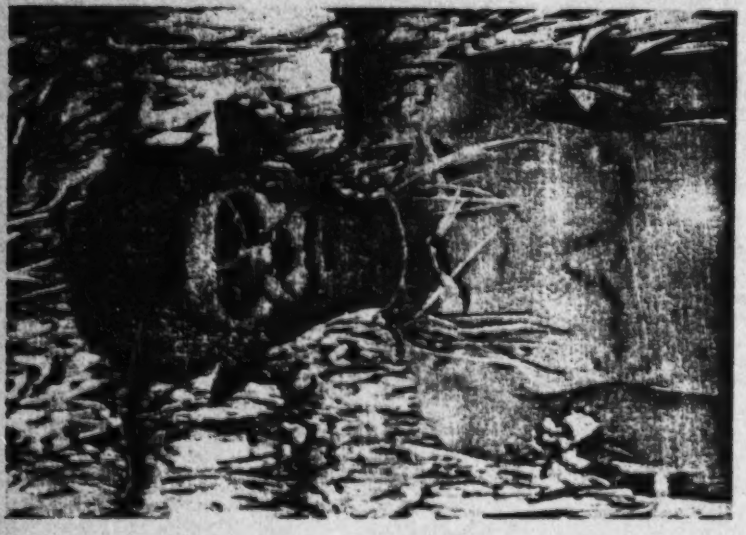
PLATE 66



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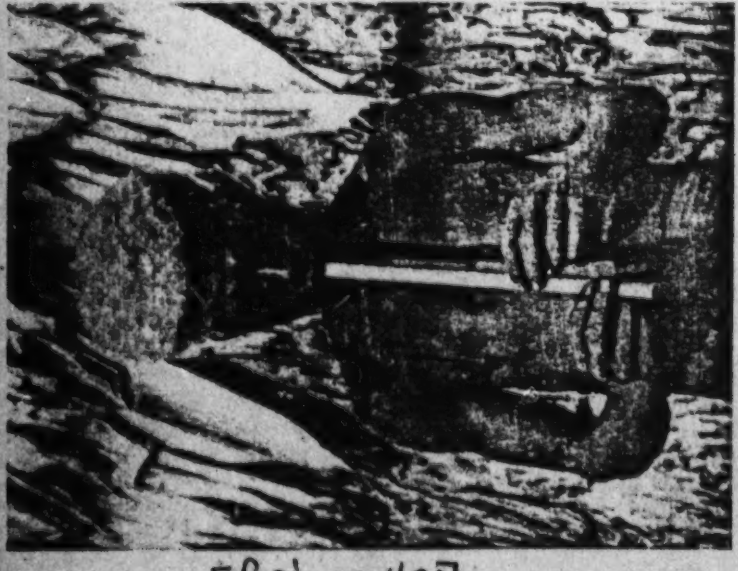
b. WASE: A YOUNG DANDY



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142

a. MAN WITH LIMED HAIR, PLAYING THE FLUTE

[facing p 421]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

302 or put on the fire. Anybody, apparently, may cut or trim the hair, so long as they do not stand in any of the taboo relationships. Men may do it for women, whether related to them or not. It is regarded [513] as a privilege as well as a duty for the wife to trim her husband's hair on the occasion of a dance or a ceremony. There is no change in the fashion of dressing the hair consequent upon marriage.

302 565 765 During a period of mourning it is forbidden to cut the hair or to put paint on it. After the death of a person of rank this prohibition extends to all the people of the village, for a commoner only to his immediate relatives. The period is terminated by a feast. For some misfortune affecting the whole village a similar prohibition may be enforced. During a part of my visit, several people in the village of Kurtatchi were affected by very bad septic sores and by common consent for several weeks no one put paint on the head or cut the hair, those not affected observing the prohibition as well as the sufferers. When they had all recovered, a feast was held, in preparation for which everybody trimmed the hair elaborately and put paint on it.

Ornaments.

301 Ornaments worn in the hair include carved combs, made of bamboo (Pl. 67, no. 9), flowers, feathers, &c. The tail-feathers of [531] the domestic cock are in great demand on festive occasions, indeed the birds seemed to be valued solely for this purpose. This form of decoration is called *sab*. Small red, green, or yellow parrot feathers are very highly prized, and are stuck into the hair in all directions, like pins in a pin-cushion. The particular kind most admired cannot be obtained in the neighbourhood of Kurtatchi, but comes from a variety of parrot found only in the hills. Flowers are stuck into the hair one on each side of the head above the ears. Small red and yellow ones are chiefly used in this way, but a single large hibiscus is sometimes seen worn over the forehead. I have seen girls wearing round their heads branches hung with limes; this has a very picturesque effect. The leaves of a number of [524] aromatic plants are also worn stuck into the hair, and those of a white variegated form of the fern *kakariuk* (*Selaginella flabellata* Spring). These white leaves are eagerly sought for in the bush, and women will pull the plants up by the roots and plant them nearer the village. Live butterflies are frequently fastened to the hair by a thin bit of fibre and left to flutter round the head, or their

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 67

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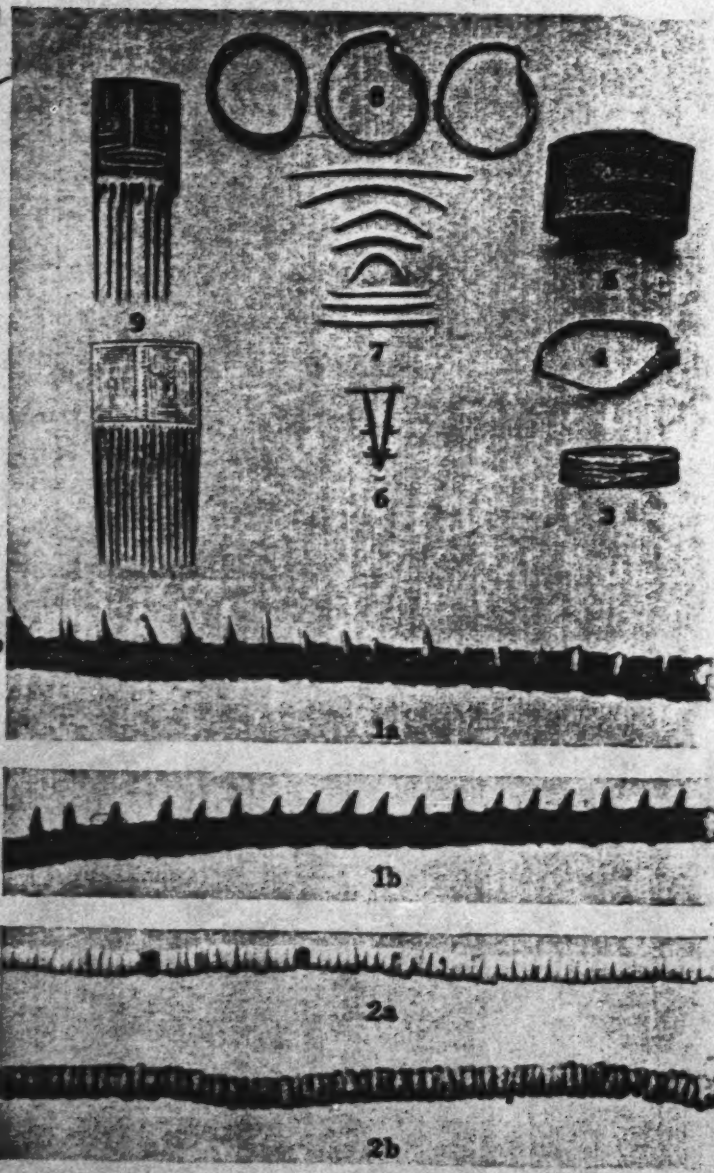

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PERSONAL ORNAMENTS AND CEREMONIAL CURRENCY

1a. *Imun* of porpoise teeth. 1b. *Imun* of flying-fox teeth. 2a. White *beroan*. 2b. Purple *beroan*. 3. Expanding armlet of pandanus leaf. 4. Armlet of plaited grass. 5. Armlet of dyed fibre, from Kumua. 6. Ear ornament. 7. Nose ornaments. 8. Armlets of trochus shell. 9. Bamboo combs.
Nos. 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, are reproduced actual size.

[facing p. 421]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 68

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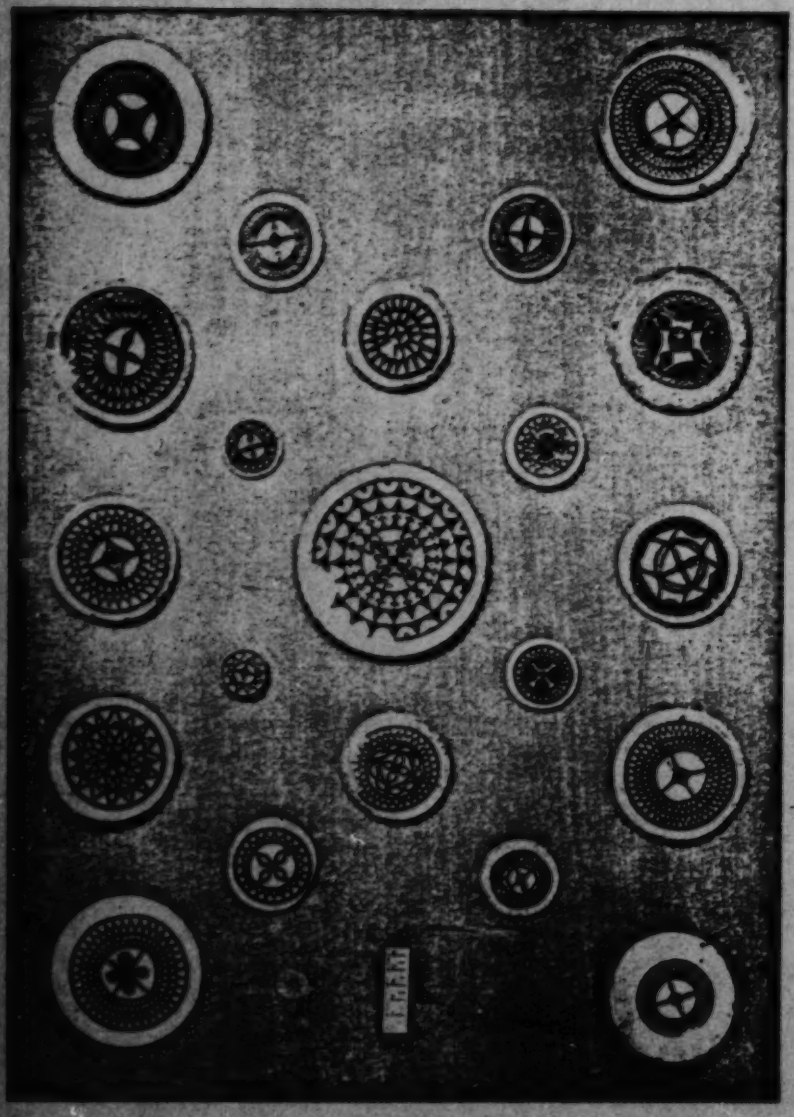

PIRIR: TORTOISE-SHELL FILIGREE WORK

[facing p. 422]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

wings are torn off and fixed one on each side of the head (Pl. 66*b*). Dabs of a phosphorescent fungus are put on the face for special occasions, and may also decorate the ends of *mabu* or *piu*.

Necklaces of aromatic plants are often worn. These may have more than an ornamental value, since many of them are regarded as 'medicine' useful in love magic or to ward off the *urar*. More permanent necklaces are made of opossum teeth, threaded on fibre through small holes made in one end of the tooth. I have seen these holes being pierced with a primitive rotary drill, but was told that this had been learned from elsewhere by people working as plantation labourers, and that no means of piercing the teeth were known before they became acquainted with this drill. At the present time many possess necklaces of trade beads, either with or without opossum-teeth interpolated. Only very small coloured beads are liked. Some necklaces of larger beads which I brought with me as presents, because they had been very successful among the American Indians, were of little use because they were considered too heavy. Strings of small beads are also worn round the wrist, and put round the waists of infants. I do not remember seeing any native form of finger-ring.

Arm-bands (*pog*) made of plaited fibre in patterns of red, black, and yellow are almost universally worn. They are not made locally, but are obtained from the hill people (see Pl. 67, no. 5). Less elaborate arm-bands are made by plaiting grass (no. 4) or strips of sago-palm leaves (*pog a tō*) (no. 3); the old men spend their leisure time making these. They are of different widths up to over an inch. Arm-bands serve as receptacles for any small articles they may wish to carry about with them, such as a pipe or a stick of tobacco. Here and there, especially at ceremonies, one may see a native wearing bands of trochus shell such as are common in other parts of Melanesia, but they are exceptional and are not made in this area (Pl. 67, no. 8).

The most highly prized ornament is the *pirir*, a disk of clam-shell with a fine piece of tortoise-shell filigree work superposed upon it (Pl. 68). These are worn as pendants, on ceremonial occasions only. In the olden days they were also worn by warriors setting out to a fight. A few are still made, a knife being used instead of the piece of sharp-edged shell formerly employed for the carving; but the present workmanship is careless and the patterns comparatively uninteresting. To save the trouble of rubbing down the hard hinge

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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301 of the clam-shell for the disk, the present-day native prefers to use the middle of a china saucer ground smooth at the edges. These [717] ornaments seem to have come under the special displeasure of the missionaries, probably owing to their connexion with ceremonies and fighting, and it is almost certain that their manufacture will shortly cease altogether. Several specimens in my collection were obtained because the owners had discarded them as belonging to the olden times.

[436] Strings of ceremonial currency made of shell disks (*beroan*, Pl. 67, 2*a*, 2*b*) are worn as ornaments at dances, being wound round the neck or waist or hung over the shoulder. Anything worn across the shoulders is referred to as *sawiro*, if put round the waist the word is *wõs*.

[789] Girdles of aromatic leaves are much liked, and may have a magical value as well as being ornamental. As a result of contact [777] with white men, belts are coming into great favour, though they are quite unnecessary for keeping the loin-cloth in position. Some of the young men have trade belts, those who have none use strips of dried banana fibre. Occasionally a belt will be seen of coloured plaited grass in a pattern similar to those on the arm-bands; these [438] are made, like the arm-bands, by the mountain natives; they are obtained by barter and are much prized. They are also sometimes made of thin strips of cane closely bound with native string. The outside is plastered with red paint put on very thickly, and looks not unlike leather.

301 The women of West Buka and the adjacent islets make belts of 184 twisted fibre, round in section, ornamented with interwoven black bands made of the shiny outer bark of the bush banana. They are finished off with a long bunch of loose threads of fibre, which hangs down behind like a tail when the belts are worn. Their use is confined to dances, and the women take pleasure in moving their bodies so that the tails wave about. Only women and children wear these belts. My friends at Petats made one specially for me, and were much pleased when I subsequently appeared in it to join in their dances. The women of Kurtatchi do not make them, and appeared to be unfamiliar with them; they were greatly interested when I showed them mine, and insisted on my putting it on and showing how the Petats women danced with it. But they made no attempt to copy it.

The belts made by women during the period of mourning for a

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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The belts made by women during the period of mourning for a

301 765 565 283 824 *tsunaun* (see Chap. XIV, p. 497, and Pl. 75) have a warp of the fibre growing round the base of the banana palm. The black threads in the weft are obtained from the trunk of the bush banana (*wirtsun*); white ones consist of the same substance scraped and rubbed with sand. The yellow threads are made from the midrib of the leaves of a plant called *kiki'ie* (*Cycas* sp.), dyed with *totomoin* (turmeric). The red threads of the specimen figured (in Pl. 75) were drawn from the maker's loin-cloth; in the olden days she would have taken leaves of the plant used in making the red part of the women's hoods, dyed with *riro* (*Morinda citrifolia*).

Deformation of the Person.

304 854 *Head.* Babies' heads are manipulated at birth and afterwards for some weeks, by pressing the hands at the back and sides to make them perpendicular. The effect desired is that which is increased by the method of hair-dressing. At birth it is done by the old women attending, frequently the grandmother, afterwards by the mother whenever she thinks of it. There is no 'cradle-board deformation'. Babies are put to sleep on the ground, on a woman's hood or a plank, but their position is varied, and they do not spend a great deal of time on their backs, so that no pressure is exercised in this way. No head-dress or bandage is used on babies. They are not nursed on the arm persistently enough to influence their head form at all.

304 *Nose.* A baby's nose is pinched soon after birth to make it grow long. A flat nose is much disliked and is a subject of ridicule. The septum is pierced at the age of five or six. It is done to children of both sexes, and is still general. The reason given is that if the septum is pierced, when the individual dies, the worms will go through the hole and will not eat the body.[1]

304 852 As a rule, a special feast is made on the occasion of the piercing. But if a feast is in progress for some other reason, it will be made to serve for the piercing as well. Should the village be in mourning for a *tsunaun*, so that no feast is permitted, the operation may be carried out without one, if the children's parents do not wish to delay it till the end of the mourning period. The actual

[1] See further discussion in Chap XIV. For another instance of the connexion between nose-piercing and the fate of the dead, cf. Codrington (1891, p. 256) who states that in Florida the ghosts of those whose noses were pierced could follow the easy path.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

operation should be performed either at sunrise or at sunset. If done in the heat of the day, 'the sun would make the wound sore'. 304 852

I saw the nose-piercing operation performed upon four boys at the village of Tung, W. Buka. They took advantage of the feast made for the new men's house, described in Chapter X, p. 389. The ages of the boys varied from about eight to about five; it was said that the youngest was included at his own request. One of the older men operated. I did not know the people well, and I omitted to ascertain whether he was chosen for any special reason. The boy came and sat on the platform in front of the new 'men's house'. The operator first warmed his index finger and thumb against a piece of smouldering wood, then pinched the septum, drawing it outwards. The hole was then made with an iron pig-spear, which was held in the septum for a few moments. In the olden days it was done with a sharply pointed piece of hard wood from the tree called *ariko*, a species of areca-nut. As soon as it was withdrawn a small stick was inserted. There seemed to be no bleeding. The first boy hardly made a sound and did not wince at all. He had a clam-shell nose-piece inserted instead of the stick. The second victim howled and tried to get away, and was held down by another man. The other two, including the youngest, flinched just a little, and whimpered. After the stick had been put in, the operator heated his finger and thumb again and pressed them against the front of the septum, pushing backwards. As soon as the operation was finished, the boys went to the back of the hut, where a screen of sago-palm leaves had been put up for them, dividing the hut into two unequal halves. I was told that they would stay there for a week without coming out. If they looked at a stone or the root of a coco-nut tree, the wound would become sore. At the end of the week they would go and wash it in the sea. Later a larger piece of cane would be given them.

Nose-pieces of clam-shell (*ahuin*) are worn by both sexes and all ages. They vary in size, curvature, and weight (see Pl. 67, no. 7). They are generally kept for ceremonial occasions, a bit of stick or a rolled-up leaf being substituted on ordinary days, but there is nothing to prevent any one from wearing the *ahuin* at any time if desired. Whatever is worn through the septum is easily removable; many people have a habit of moving it backwards and forwards with the index-finger and thumb as they walk or talk. 301 ● [155] [201]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

301 Sometimes they say the hole is painful and will leave it empty for a few days.

304 Several people had the septum torn right through. This means that the unfortunate individual cannot wear a nose-piece any more, since there is no way of mending it.

Ears. The ears are pierced at about the same age as the septum, sometimes at the same ceremony, but this is usually considered to be too much for the child. It is done in the same way as the septum. I had no opportunity of seeing this operation. The [184] people of Buka and North Bougainville bore one hole only. The Kunua people bore two small ones; they wear the bone of a flying fox threaded through both holes, and an ornament made of tortoise-shell and disks made of flat sections of a small shell (*popoli*) may be hung on it (Pl. 67, no. 6).

301 Where there is only one hole, a number of small tortoise-shell rings (*wawakut*) are worn, from which *popoli* are hung. All sorts of things may be put into the hole, rolled leaves, sticks of tobacco, &c. My empty cartridge cases introduced a new fashion. I have also seen shillings carried thus, though these are more likely to be placed inside the ear. The lobe is frequently greatly elongated; when in this condition a pipe stem may be put through the hole and the lobe twisted round to keep it in position. Any article put through the hole in the ear-lobe is called *wapis*.

304 Owing to the strain to which they are thus subjected, ear-lobes are often torn right through. There is no method of repairing this injury, but another hole may be made above it. The ear-lobe is never torn intentionally.

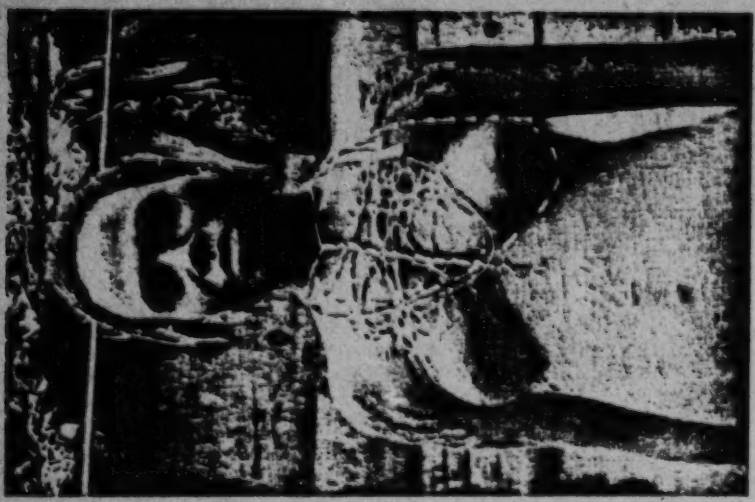
Teeth. There is no extraction, filing, or other manipulation of [164] the teeth. Gaps are frequently seen, even in young people, but this is due to the teeth falling out on account of disease. The teeth are always, except in quite young children, discoloured by constant chewing of the betel-mixture.

Cicatrization.

Tattooing is not practised. It would not show to advantage on these dark skins. Its place is taken by cicatrization. There are two distinct types of marking. One may be put on at any time, and is done either by the individual himself or by a friend; the other is a ceremonial affair performed in childhood by certain recognized practitioners.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 71



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CICATRIZATION BADLY HEALED

[853
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[facing p. 432]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Woven designs.

301 531 [438] The woven arm-bands are obtained from the people of the mountains, and are not made locally. The meaning of most of the designs could not be ascertained. That figured in Pl. 67, no. 5, which somewhat resembles a Greek key pattern, was said to represent a man, but no explanation was forthcoming.

765 531 [565] A number of different patterns are incorporated in the mourning

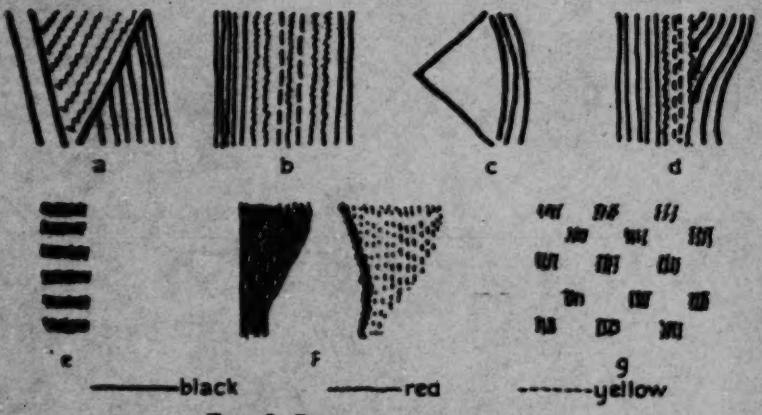

FIG. 28. Patterns on mourning belt.

belt woven by the women on the occasion of the death of a person of rank (Pl. 75, no. 1). These are all traditional, and were explained as follows (the letters refer to Fig. 28): (*a*) *pekpeko*, name of pattern; (*b*) *taparo*, name of pattern; (*c*) *wumus*, a little fish found on the reef at low tide; (*d*) *bas*, the iguana; (*e*) *mirē*, a small sea-urchin plentiful on the reef; (*f*) *katʃian*, croton leaves; (*g*) *owan a tō*, fruit of the sago palm.

Patterns on pottery.

323 531 [422] The only patterns used on the Buka pottery are the simple nicks and lines, made with the crinkled edge of a shell, or with the finger-nails, round the edges of the pots (Pl. 61*a*). At Malasang, where the pots are made, I was told that these marks, besides being put on for ornament, also served as a sign of ownership. But I noticed that the potter put the same pattern on several consecutive pots, so no monopoly of pattern could be claimed by the several owners.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
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p. 390), that in use on Buka and Bougainville is, according to all my informants, obtained from New Britain and New Ireland, and especially from Manus in the Admiralty Islands. They made no mention of any from elsewhere, except that I was told that there was one man living on a small island off the west coast of Buka who knew how to make it. I was not able to verify this. It is called *beroan*, the same term being employed in all dialects with which I have any acquaintance. Three varieties are seen. The most common are either white or purplish (see Pl. 67, 2*a*, 2*b*). A third consists of rather larger disks of a brownish colour, and is distinguished from the other two by name, *kulin*, in the Petats dialect. The disks are strung on native fibre string, small black rings of some vegetable substance being sometimes incorporated in the string at irregular intervals. So far as I could ascertain, this is done merely for the sake of its appearance, and not to mark lengths or values. The unit of length is the fathom (about 6 feet). A single string is considered to be the equivalent of 5*s*. The Bougainville natives say that they did not fix this value themselves, but took it over from the people of New Britain and Manus with the strings themselves. I found it quite impossible to elicit any information as to how long the use of this shell currency had been known in Bougainville, or how it first came to be associated with a value in terms of shillings.

Beroan is not used in the ordinary exchanges which have been described in the foregoing pages, but is given in payment for certain things only. It is also used for personal ornament, being worn round the waist or slung across the shoulders of adults or children for ceremonial dances and on other special occasions. Larger shells with dogs' teeth inside are sometimes attached to short strings of *beroan* which are then used as rattles, either to amuse infants or as an accompaniment to a dance.

Some uses of *beroan* (other than for personal adornment) which came under my notice are listed below:

1. Several fathoms change hands in the course of the transactions connected with marriage.
2. As compensation for theft, in return for release of culprits.
3. As part payment for pigs.
4. As payment for carving *kaisa* figure.
5. As payment for being taught certain kinds of magic.
6. Thrown into coffin of *waris* as sign of grief.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

436 The other variety of ceremonial currency is called *paio* in the Petats dialect and *imun* in the Kurtatchi dialect. It is apparently of more ancient usage then *beroan*, and of local origin. Some of the older men know how to make it, but do not often add to the existing quantity in circulation; whether this is due to the trouble involved in the manufacture, or to some ritual restriction, I am unable to say. I did not come across any one who possessed this skill.

Imun consists of a string of teeth, either of porpoise (or dolphin) or of flying fox (*Terapus*) but never both in the same string, set [171] into a kind of rope of twisted fibre so that their pointed ends jut out (Pl. 67, 1*a*, 1*b*). Dogs' teeth, which are reported from Florida and Ysabel (Codrington, 1891, p. 325), are not used in this area. The strings are covered with *oin*, and when not in use are kept in a receptacle—a pot or a coco-nut shell—filled with this red powder.

The unit of length is the same as for *beroan*. One fathom (*pe'es a yau*) of *imun* made of flying-fox teeth measured 5 ft. 11 in.; the teeth started 11½ in. from one end and 9 in. from the other. A fathom of porpoise teeth *imun* measured 6 ft. 5 in.; the teeth started 15 in. from one end and 13½ in. from the other, the rest of the length at both extremities being merely string. These were considered rather short strings; the teeth in them were small. In both strings the teeth were set 5 to the inch.

[435] A fathom is now arbitrarily valued by the natives at one *fius* (£5 of our money). But in point of fact the question does not often arise, because the Government has forbidden both *imun* and *beroan* to be used in any transaction involving white people, owing to the trouble arising over its valuation. Between natives, it is used only for important transactions, such as making the ceremonial payments in respect of marriage, and for buying pigs. Some strings are given names and are much treasured by their owners, who keep [765] them to hand on to their heirs. To some of these relics are attached, such as portions of the person of an ancestor or of an enemy who [565] has been eaten (see p. 192). The *tsunaun* is always supposed to possess a large number of strings, but he keeps carefully secret the actual number he owns, taking out a portion of his stock for exchange or for ceremonial exhibition when required. *Imun* is never [301] used purely for personal adornment, but a string may be hung on the person ceremonially on certain rare occasions.

Burial Practices

Obviously, a person's death also gives rise to many festivities and ceremonies. In Buka and north Bougainville only two methods of burial are known: namely, ahãrre kuerre or submerging the corpse at sea; and ha zérokere de akui or burying the corpse. During the burial a great meal (a kãnano a kapane) is provided by the survivors. The dance that is performed afterwards is called a kũmar. These festivities in honor of the deceased are repeated from time to time. During the ceremony men and women paint themselves white. -- In south Bougainville in Shortland the method is similar, but here cremation is also known, which is called hanghãli in Shortland and kasivei in Bougainville. Cremation of the body is a mark of the aristocrat and probably a custom imported from the south. Less exalted people are buried (mõõ kũsisai in Bougainville and nahonaha in Shortland) or submerged in the ocean (fanfãntup in Shortland and on the coast). No matter what sort of burial, great banquets are the rule at all of them; naturally the cremation of the aristocrats is carried out on a magnificent scale. The funereal pyre is erected in the village itself, usually rectangular and flanked at each corner by a high pole. This pole is frequently carved roughly in the shape of a human face at the upper end and painted black or red; but I also saw very simple poles with no painting or carving; the latter as well as the former were called kakalo. After the corpse is placed on the pyre, the pyre is lighted to the accompaniment of loud lamenting and howling. The burning never suffices to transform the body completely into ashes; the bone remains are carefully collected by the family and kept for several days in the hut of the deceased; during this period the lament rarely ceases, and it is especially the wives who develop a particular virtuosity in this respect. After this period the actual burial of the remains takes place. In the place where the corpse was burned, between the four kakalo, a pit is dug and an earthen jug is deposited in it; the remains of the corpse are placed in this jug and a second jug is inverted over it, serving as a lid for the first; then the pit is filled up with dirt. This procedure is called irinãfui in Shortland and nõmokai in Bougainville. Simultaneously most of the relatives put on a big banquet (funfapasa in Shortland and kãna mĩnavai in Bougainville), whereby everything edible is served, with the exception of taro, which is forbidden on this occasion. The women put on mourning as before by covering their faces and the upper

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chest with a heavy layer of white paint. This material is a kind of soil that is found in certain areas of Bougainville and called mā (māso in Shortland); this soil, kept wrapped in leaves, until needed, is then pulverized and mixed with the juice of sugar cane so that a rather thick dough is formed. The men do not paint themselves. After a few months another great banquet (mōu in Bougainville and isāisa kavunoi in Shortland) is given in memory of the deceased; after this the women remove their white mourning paint, and thereby bring the whole death ceremony to an end. In some places the place of burial is fenced in with four boards that form an oblong rectangle and in part are carved and painted. Within this fence (called brotoko) all sorts of effects of the deceased are placed: strings of beads, bracelets and similar objects; also bright-flowering ornamental shrubs and flowers are planted on the spot.

Cremation is to be found on the east coast of Bougainville all the way up to the village of Toboroi; the practice does not seem to exist beyond that point; on the west side I found this custom in Siuai, but likewise no farther north than there.

766 [565]

Formerly it was the rule that a slave was killed at the death of an aristocrat. The custom may have declined somewhat in most recent times, but even today it is still [10] practiced in regions where the natives are not strongly influenced by the whites. I conclude this from the fact that, after I had sought enlightenment on this point from various people and had always received a negative answer, a boy of twelve gave me the desired information. He seemed to see nothing wrong in it and hence found no reason to keep it a secret. Even the older ones ceased to deny it when they saw that I knew about this custom. Normally only one slave is killed; the corpse is not eaten, but remains lying in the same spot until some friends bury it; if this does not happen, then it simply lies there until dogs, boars and decomposition have done their work.

Masks, Mask Customs and Related Matters

532 171

In Bougainville as well as in Buka and on the Nissan Group masks are used for certain festivities. The few masks that I got to see in Bougainville consisted of bent wooden boards that were painted black, and a protruding nose was carved on them; there were apertures for

frequently finger thick; it is simply knotted in back. In Buka and north Bougainville the women stick a bundle of dried foliage under this belt so that the genitals are concealed. Young girls as a rule do without even this clothing. Over this first belt frequently a broader belt smeared red with ochre is placed; it is likewise called mávesi. It consists of strips of rattan laid next to each other, which are tied to each other with thin strands of thread in such a way that the rattan strips form the warp for the very carefully executed weaving. These belts are 5 to 8 centimeters wide; they are worn only by old and married women. In Taboroi on the east coast of Bougainville the married women wear large dried leaves of a fan palm, whose outer edge is embroidered with a delicate and broad pattern of dark fiber material; this apron is pressed firmly against the front part of the body with one hand when the wearer is walking or sitting. In a village inland from Taboroi I saw a very pretty genital apron on some women. It was made of fine fibers dyed red; a number of these fibers of eighty centimeters length were woven in the center -- for about ten centimeters of their length -- to form a cord of about the thickness of a pencil, and several of these strands were attached lengthwise to one another. The skirt is shoved underneath the belt and the woven part is then folded over the top. A few women were wearing over this genital skirt an even broader belt made of an approximately ten centimeter wide plant material (pandanus?); this was woven through with dark red fibers and wound several times around the waist.

Among the various clothing objects one must also name the umbrellas and parasols made of strips of pandanus leaves, which are used in the Bougainville Strait as well as in Buka. The rectangle of 100 x 60 centimeters which is made out of pandanus strips sewn together is folded lengthwise and sewed together at one end; to use it one places the upper sewed end over the head and lets the remaining part fall down across the back. This article of clothing is completely rain repellent. Sometimes it is made of natural-colored and red-dyed strips, and sometimes the edges or even the whole thing is worked with pretty patterns.

Jewelry is not extensively used. Natives like those of the northern Solomon Islands, who always have their weapons at hand and expend the greatest care on them, do not have a highly developed sense for bodily decoration. Gay-colored blossoms and foliage are occasionally used in the dances; a red hibiscus blossom in the black woolly hair is a favorite ornament of the young dandies. In addition, however,

there are ornamental objects shells and other materials that are occasionally put on. 301

The islanders wear a twofold ornament as war decoration. First the head is decorated with a plume made of white and yellow cockatoo feathers. Then [20] the warrior hangs a bunch of red and yellow-colored leaf strips around his neck and arranges it in such a way that it hangs down his back. In Buka this ornament is called kehala; it is made of strips of dried palm leaves approximately 50 centimeters long which are firmly fastened together at one end to form a round button, to which the cord that is put around the neck is attached. The strips that hang down loose are dyed red for a distance of about 10 centimeters from the button; then there is a section of about 10 centimeters which is left its original color; the remainder--about 30 centimeters--is again dyed red. This dye pattern, however, is not constant, even though it is the one that occurs by far the most frequently; it seems to be adjusted to the taste of the individual, but the red color is never missing. The kehala is a talisman that is supposed to protect one from being wounded in war, and it corresponds to the actual war ornament of the Admiralty Islanders, which consists of a human bone that is tightly wound with the pinions of the frigate bird. 301 174 [178] [171]

The men pierce the septum of the nose and insert a plug of polished tridacna shell through the opening. This plug, called huin in Buka, varies in length and thickness; I have seen some 13 centimeters in length and 1 centimeter in diameter. Both ends of the carefully smoothed and rounded huin are pointed. 301 [304]

Earrings are not frequent, but here and there the young men wear ear ornaments (hakoto in Buka) made of white snail shells and differing in form and arrangement. Normally 3 to 10 white snail shells are sewed on each side of a straight little piece of wood, and a single snail finishes off the row at the lower end; sometimes the wood is bent or broken and sewed only on one side with snail shells; normally a red-dyed strip of rattan is fastened lengthwise over the wood to conceal the threads with which the snails are attached.

Chest ornaments are likewise not common; apart from the now very fashionable European beads I observed two different breast plates that are similar in form. Both consist of a circular plate of polished tridachna shell. One type is decorated by placing on it a thin plate of tortoise shell with filigree work; in Buka it is called gulu, and it is identical with the same ornament in the Admiralty Islands, in New Mecklenburg, and in the southern Solomon Islands, although it does not reach by far the refinement of the 301 171

tortoise shell ornaments such as those produced for example on Fischer and Gardner Islands. The other type consists likewise of a round tridachna plate, which, however, does not have on its surface a tortoise shell plate, but an engraved bird-like ornament that is dyed black; this far less frequent type is called kini in Buka. I believe that only these two forms are characteristic for the northern Solomon Islands. Now and then you find another ornamental object which upon questioning always turns out to have been brought in from other regions. On the east side of the island of Bougainville a few years ago I got a necklace of closely strung circular disks that overlapped--it was made from the upper part of a conus shell. I immediately recognized the Gilbert Islands as the place of origin of this necklace, and I soon found out that it had been taken from the occupants of a boat that had been driven ashore long ago. 301 171

On the Shortland Islands you still occasionally run into a sort of chest ornament that is made of brownish-red, black and white shell disks and which there plays a similar rôle to that of the crown jewels of civilized countries. They are called kiš and are so rare that everybody knows where such a treasure is to be found. Years ago the old chieftain Gorai showed me such an article, but could not be persuaded to give it up; even the most enticing offer was absolutely refused. After the death of the old man three such kiš are supposed to have been distributed; one is in the hands of a chieftain in south Bougainville, a second is kept by one of the sons of the deceased, and a third, in 1895, came into the possession of an Austrian Count Festetics, who got it by trade from a relative of the dead man in exchange for a repeating rifle with shells. The kiš consists first of a square with sides about 15 centimeters long. This square is made of reddish-brown disks that are attached firmly to one another in rows and form a wide frame; the middle is filled out with smaller squares in open work, made of brownish red, white, and black disks. One side of the square has long strands of rowed disks [21] that hang free; the opposite side has a number of similar strands fastened by their ends to both corners of the square; when the ornament is donned these strands are put across the head, the square then hangs at the chest, and the dangling strands form a sort of apron. These articles surely came north by way of trade from the islands situated farther to the south. After European glass beads were introduced into these regions, they made from this material quite similar articles, which however do not enjoy the esteem of the original. Red, white and blue beads take the place of the reddish-brown, white and black shell disks.

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Arm ornaments in the form of polished rings or ingeniously woven bands are not infrequent. The arm rings in the northwestern Solomon Islands however are almost all imported from other regions. A flat ring of tridachna shell--up to 2 centimeters in thickness--whose outer side has a deep groove, is produced on the Island of Wonneran and diffuses as an object of trade to Nissan and from there farther to the southeast. Fine rings of about 1 centimeter in width and rounded on the outside are made in Rubiana and New Georgia. I will also mention that the latter rings are of greater or lesser value according to the material used to make them. Rings of trochus are not so highly regarded as the arm rings made of the large conus shells which have a beautiful ivory-like white sheen. The only arm rings produced in the northwestern Solomon Islands are made from the lower part of a species of trochus and are very rough and irregular; they are not in the least comparable to the carefully polished arm rings of New Mecklenburg made of the same material or the ornamented arm rings from the Admiralty Islands or western New Pomerania.

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The islanders apply far greater care to the manufacture of woven armrings. Here again it is the mountain inhabitants of Bougainville who produce the best work--woven articles that with regard to multiplicity of patterns and the tasteful arrangement of colors are equal to the best work of the South Seas of the same sort. These arm rings (basbas in Buka) are 1 1/2 to 7 centimeters wide. The basic weave consists either of black or of brownish-red fibers of about one millimeter in width; the figures are made of golden yellow, red and black fibers and the patterns vary considerably; zigzag lines of greater or lesser width, rectangles and squares executed in one color or in stripes of different colors are the most frequently recurring figures; not infrequently one also sees the Greek fret pattern [die Greekborte] executed in a completely correct style. These woven bracelets have a great value in the eyes of the coastal inhabitants, and it is difficult to persuade the owners to exchange them for other items; as a rule they resist the most enticing offers.

On the north coast of Bougainville, in isolated cases, I have encountered a wrist ornament that is very rare and called kunoos. This ornament consists of a string of snails whose upper rounded shell has been removed so that only the lower flat shell is left. The whole string is about 120 centimeters long, and the disks are fastened to one another in such a way that the string has three sides; the largest disks are placed in the middle--for a length of about forty centimeters--and then toward the two ends they gradually become smaller so that at the extreme ends they are scarcely half as large as the disks in the middle. This very flexible chain--

not unlike our scale-chains [Schuppenketten: A part of the German parade uniform, ed.] --is wound around the wrist. 301

Leg ornaments are seldom worn. On Bougainville I have occasionally observed rattan bands that were bound tightly around the ankles and that were sometimes dyed red; these rings are woven around the ankle and cannot be removed.

For toilet purposes a comb is used or, more properly speaking, an instrument for scratching the hair. Sometimes this instrument consists of a single, thin, pointed piece of wood, and sometimes it has from two to five teeth. Bamboo is the material normally used, but in south Bougainville they make them with greater care. There the upper end is often neatly woven for about 4 to 6 centimeters with variously colored bast fibers. The owner of a comb like this sticks it into his thick woolly tuft and, when he has the time and opportunity he scratches his hairdo into place. I wish to observe here also that the islanders do not treat their hair with lime; only on festive [22] occasions do they dye their hair with various pigments pulverized in oil. Red, green and white are the favorite colors, and by means of these various patterns are produced. The same colors serve also for the beautification of the body: burned ochre supplies the material for the red streaks around the eyes and mouth or for dyeing the external ear red; white is less common and is for the most part customary only for certain mourning ceremonies. 302 [386]

Money

In Buka and northern Bougainville, as well as on the Carteret and Nissan Islands, three different types of money are to be found, of which two are characteristic for this region. Almost all the types of money that I have seen in the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Islands consist of shells worked to a greater or lesser extent; in the northwest part of the Solomon group the current money is made of animal teeth. The generic term for it is ulfiu, but it is divided into two types, called reki and baiu: reki consists of the teeth of a type of bat; baiu, on the other hand, is made from the teeth of dolphins. A string of reki has about 300 teeth and is about 110 centimeters long, whereas the baiu strings consist of about 500 teeth and are 3 meters long; however, they are of equal value. All the teeth are bored through at the root and strung on a thin thread. The teeth are 436 [71]